

COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY PLANNING AND RESPONSE

MINUTES

September 26, 2002

Attendees:

Capt. Tim Lockett - Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP)
Gale Haag - State Fire Marshal's Office
Steve Woolington – Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)
Britt McKinney – Wolf Creek Generating Plant
Karen Schuyler – Astaris
Randy Duncan – Chairman, Sedgwick County Emergency Management
Jerry Davis – Finney County Commissioner
Major General Greg Gardner – Adjutant General
Dr. Mike Moser – Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE)
Jack Taylor – City of Emporia Fire Department

Members of public and support staff were in attendance.

Members in Attendance by Conference Call:

Dr. Lyle Noordhoek – Central Plains Laboratory

Members not in Attendance:

Dick Heitschmidt – City of Hutchinson

Meeting:

- Meeting opened at 9:30 – Randy Duncan provide opening comments.
- Minutes from May 17, 2002 meeting - reviewed, Jerry Davis moved, Tim Lockett seconded, and unanimously approved
- Committee Reports were presented:

Kansas Hazard Mitigation Team 9:35	Julie Eichem
LEPC Appointment Committee 9:37	Leticia Arzate
Terrorism Working Group	Gene Krase

New Business addressed:

- LEPC Funding 9:47 – 10:06 Frank Moussa
Frank Moussa - presented a Kansas Division of Emergency Management (KDEM) researched report on TIER II Fees and their use other states stressing Massachusetts' use of HMEP funds to fund TIER II programs.
Gen. Gardner – What is the \$280,000 fees collected annually by Kansas used for?

Frank Moussa – They are used to fund the KDHE and KDEM Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act (SARA) Title III program, which includes but is not limited to spill notification and TIER II submittal.

Randy Duncan – The funds are used to support State operations (fee for service) vs. funding the program solely on taxpayers dollars.

Randy Duncan – Requested confirmation from Frank that there is no statutory requirement preventing LEPC's from collecting fees. Frank confirmed no current restrictions, however it would have to be done through local ordinances.

Leticia Arzate – other states' LEPC's that collect TIER II fees do it through local ordinances and Florida collects per employee versus commodity and quantity.

- Public Safety Wireless Strategy 10:07 David Lake

The Kansas Communications Committee identified 4 areas of concern:

- 1) Recruitment and providers – part-time or volunteers certified as attendants, especially in rural areas.
- 2) Education and training
- 3) Funding – up keep, certification, and training are all costly.
- 4) Communications – Gov. requested the Kansas Communications Committee identify concerns they have after 9/11. The capability to protect vulnerable populations is the lead concern. Many people died in 9/11 because of the lack of communications and/or capabilities to communicate between response agencies, due to every agency maintaining different radio frequencies, etc.

The Committee would like to see an increase in communication capabilities so all responders can communicate with each other. The Kansas Communications Committee is on the agenda for Associated Public Communications Officials (APCO) agenda to see what their capabilities are. The goal is to identify who and what the counties have via maps and work on developing a statewide communication system. The KDOT infrastructure is a 800 MHz communications system, a higher frequency than most local responders. The Committee's goal is to identify what can be used state wide so that the counties will be willing to invest money in the program.

A survey is being generated for counties to identify local capabilities and resources.

Gen. Gardner – Requested the Kansas Communications Committee include a letter informing locals on why the survey is being conducted and why it is important to fund a State-Wide Communication Program/Plan.

David Lake – 800 MHz systems are too costly and that is why the Board of EMS is not using it. Currently the State is only funding KDOT and KHP. The Committee is currently seeking federal funds to support this program that is why there is a push to complete the survey quickly so that they can request the funds before the timeline for the program elapses.

Karen Schulyer – Requested the number of states using statewide systems.

David Lake – Illinois is one of the states and there are more.

Gen. Gardner – Thanked David Lake for his accepting the role of Committee chair. He then asked if Public Works is included in the survey?

David Lake – LEPC/Emergency Management are on the survey not public works.

Gen. Gardner – believed Local Public Works should be included as they are first responders many forget.

Randy Duncan – Sedgwick County Public works is on the trunk system but not dispatched by the 911 Dispatchers.

Gen. Gardner – Communication is clearly a large-scale problem. At the Wings over Topeka Air show (attended by over 80,000) the National Guard Civil Support Team (CST) used their communications van to connect all the local and neighboring first responders. Developing mutual aid agreements prior to an organized event allowed the responders to program and link their radios and other communication equipment ahead of time. Hopefully the committee will find the best way to facilitate pre-coordination and mutual aid agreements among first responders in communities across the state. This should be established as part of the local emergency response plan and doing this prior to an emergency event allows responders to know what their counterparts will bring to an incident. However, responders should be able to communicate with each other no matter where they are.

Jerry Davis – If it is identified to the rural communities that this type of program is a federal initiative, locals will expect federal funds. Counties need to be presented with the problem and bite the bullet to fund such programs.

Randy Duncan – Air America crash communications could not occur between responders, and now 9/11 has occurred and communication could still not occur. This is a reoccurring problem, which hasn't been resolved.

He reiterated that there have been supplemental grants for such programs and hopes to see them.

Jerry Davis – Addressed the fact and hopes we can do more than just identify the problem.

Steve Woolington - Fought for 8 years to start a program at \$15 million and it cost \$34 million. KDOT could get \$25 million in federal funds but they need assistance in getting the state match. Timing is important to get this award.

David Lake – spoke on problems with communication between states and locals; and state to state, etc. Closed by saying the importance and need for such a plan can't be stressed enough.

- Hazmat Response Team Update 10:38 Gale Haag

4-member subcommittee to review the applications for Regional HazMat Response Teams and Chemical Assessment Teams.

Topeka Fire Department and Hays Fire Department are up and running.

State Fire Marshal's Office is actively providing HazMat Technician Course. Currently the following cities have been provided with the training: Topeka (68 responders attending), Wichita (76 responders), Salina (48 responders), and Dodge City (29 responders).

Seven applicants have been tentatively approved: Seward/Liberal, Ford County, Concordia, Winfield/Ark City, El Dorado, and Emporia.

Randy Duncan – Has there been an analysis from the Fire Marshal's office on fee funding?

Gail Haag – Fee funding has been frozen, there will be no more money for locals for equipment or funding.

- West Nile Virus 10:43

Dr. Gail Hansen

West Niles has hit Kansas. As of September 25, 2002, 340 horses and 120 birds have tested positive in 87 Counties. No human cases confirmed to this date.

Money from a CDC grant \$125,000, 2001 and \$200,000 this year were provided to conduct surveillance. One quarter of the funds is for human surveillance. Some of the 2002 funds are being used to raise animal surveillance capabilities. One quarter of the money will be going to awareness training, currently three letters have been sent to physicians, one letter to veterinarians, and a web site has been developed. www.oznet.cdu.westnilesvirus

Information posted on secured website for public health agencies. Information is being provided through training opportunities throughout the state.

Gen. Gardner – At the Midwest Governors Conference, complimented KDHE and used its handling of West Nile as a great example of how to perform risk communications. He stressed the importance of timing was for risk communication and how KDHE's timing had been perfect (within 10 days of West Nile hitting Kansas).

Gail Haag - Observed currently there has only a vaccination for horses.

Gail Hansen - Confirmed this and added that among people, children are the least susceptible, and those over age 50 are the most vulnerable.

Gen. Gardner – 1500 nationally 50 died. What other animals are affected?

Gail Hansen – Other mammals have shown signs of encephalitis/brain disease, but it hasn't been confirmed that it was West Niles. Other animals could be impacted but not likely.

Gen. Gardner – I understand birds are the source the disease is transmitted by mosquitoes?

Gail Hansen – Yes birds are the only vectors with a high enough concentration to transmit the disease to mosquitoes. The concentration in horses and humans is not high enough to be transmitted.

Randy Duncan – What is syndrome surveillance? It was recently provided to the public health departments via the web site.

Dr. Moser – Confirmatory testing at CDC takes weeks. Syndrome surveillance is pulling reports on cases that have no cause for encephalitis.

Gail Hansen – Confirmed this type of comparative study.

Dr. Moser – In the field, Public Health personnel need to be aware of Flavy Viruses, which are similar to West Niles. The tests that are available, test for a group of antigens and do not identify a history of West Nile or its positive results.

Gail Hansen – General testing kits (e.g., for anthrax or West Nile) show a high number of false negatives. Actual laboratory testing is the more credible and precise method of testing.

Anne Allen – What degree of frost is required to slow down the mosquito population?

Gail Hansen – At 50 degrees adult mosquitoes are pretty slow. Enough frost to cover the ground should end mosquito season.

Frank Moussa – Is surveillance/sample collection is still being conducted?

Gail Hansen – Yes, animal surveillance is still being conducted. This is still done so that the status of the disease can be monitored properly.

- Bio-Terrorism Programs 11:05 Dr. Mike Moser

The Initial 3 yr focus is Public Health communication/training, and Epidemiology Support. The Hospital Program is the newest: There were no Hospital Programs for acts of terrorism.

2002 Hospital Preparedness: Assessing need, developing plans to fulfill need.

What are the standards for civilian Hospital preparedness? Extensive review of civilian hospitals identified that there were no standards.

KDHE's mission is to prepare standards for civilian hospitals for Bio-terrorism preparedness.

Jerry Davis – Indicated the quicker you get this information to the rural communities the faster they could work on the response issues that need to be addressed at a local level.

Dr. Moser – Conveyed this to be their goal.

Randy Duncan – Mentioned that their responders were gathering a high level of training to sustain an incident, but when they looked at their emergency rooms they realized they didn't have the capabilities to address the victims.

Dr. Moser – Spoke on increasing National Standards for the hospitals that have (Joint Commission Accreditation of Health Care Organizations) JCAHCO. Currently fewer than 50% are JCAHCO accredited.

Leticia Arzate – What hospitals are covered under the grant? Are private hospitals included?

Dr. Moser – All general hospitals are being covered no specialized agencies.

- DOJ Grant Update 11:19

Tim Lockett

KHP is policing the program to ensure that the counties do not purchase equipment that they can't use.

1999 –2001 passed through 101.3% of DOJ funds to the counties.

As September 13, the 2002 funds for Kansas are available. \$4.1 million in total, \$3.9 million for equipment and \$184,000 for exercises.

- EPA Update 11:27

Steve Wurtz

LEPC Conference is Aug. 22-24, 2003 in Omaha.

As October 1st, The Tier II software is available through EPA web site. The software is free, but some maintenance is required.

Randy Duncan – Tier II is not compatible with the Jordan System.

Frank Moussa – Currently Kansas uses the Jordan System software developed for KDHE in the 1990's. KDHE is currently looking at updating this software. We recommended KDHE consider using the 2002 TIER II Submit program developed by EPA. The review of this software is currently being addressed.

Julia Hanson – The new TIER II Submit program, developed by EPA is very compatible with the new version of CAMEOfm.

Next Meeting Matrix 11:30

Dr. Noordhoek: Thanked KDHE for their programs.

- Meeting adjourned at 11:35